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**The Climate of Wisconsin and its Relation to Agriculture.** By A. R. Whitson and O. E. Baker. 65 pp. *Bull. 223, Agric. Exp. Sta., Univ. of Wisconsin.* Madison, Wis., 1912.

It is a sign of the times that more and more attention is being paid to the economic aspects of climatology; that simple tabulations, however complete and accurate they may be, are being supplemented, and in some cases replaced by discussions of the larger relations which climates have to man. Very few persons can find a real live interest in "dry" climatic tabulations. Few can even find any real information in them. But as soon as a competent writer takes these tables, culls out from them the really essential things, puts these essentials in brief and easily-remembered form, and then points out the economic bearings of these larger climatic characteristics, then his readers begin to see that climatic discussions really can be made interesting, and that the human aspects of climatology are full of importance in every-day life.

Messrs. Whitson and Baker have prepared a report on the climate of Wisconsin in relation to agriculture which gives the most important facts of climate and points out their relation to field crops, the dairy industry and fruit-growing. We hope other states will follow with similar reports. There are several charts and diagrams, but the isohyetal lines on the mean annual rainfall map are puzzling.

R. DEC. WARD.

**The Ships and Sailors of Old Salem.** The Record of a Brilliant Era of American Achievement. By Ralph D. Paine. xv and 515 pp. Ills., index. A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago, 1912. \$2. 8½ x 6.

This is an historical account of the maritime commerce of Salem, Mass., from 1680 when shipping was in its infancy and the struggle for an existence by trading ended commonly in defeat, through the years when Salem was the foremost seaport of the United States from the standpoint of imports from foreign shores, to about 1870 when the city in the face of new conditions turned its back to the sea and became a manufacturing center.

Much of the book is detailed excerpts from the logs and journals of a number of masters who were preeminently the leaders among the host of captains who sailed from this port. Here may be found the story of the early commerce with the West Indies and the Barbary Coast, with the East Indies and Japan. The first voyage to Japan of an American ship, under contract with the Dutch East India Company is related at length and the vivid picture of the barriers erected by the Japanese people against foreign contamination before the visit of Commodore Perry's squadron in 1853 is instructive and interesting. The Salem ships sailed the seven seas; cargoes of marketable commodities were brought from distant lands; the privateer fought the pirate and the jealous foreign competitor; it was an age of adventure and romance. The author, who set himself the task of compiling a book from the old manuscripts to commemorate the skill and daring of the Yankee sailor, has succeeded admirably.

ROBERT M. BROWN.

**The Story of the Bronx,** from the Purchase Made by the Dutch from the Indians in 1639 to the Present Day. By Stephen Jenkins. xix and 451 pp. Map, illus., index. G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York. 1912. \$3.50. 9½ x 6½.

The interest of this narrative is imperfectly sustained. The result is patchy. In part, this defect is due to the absence of a well ordered plan in the study of the material; perhaps still more to the interlacing of two schemes of treatment which in themselves are scarcely to be coordinated. In the earlier and to some extent, in later chapters, the author has prosecuted his researches through the development of the waterways of the region as natural lines of communication, the beginning of the trail of the Indian, the lane of the early settler on his frontier farm, the postroad, the city street, becoming in

richest measure in the Bronx the parkway. It is not merely ornamental to hint that the Bronx has been an exposed frontier; it was at some inexactly determined spot within its present urban borders that the good Anne Hutchinson fell a victim to the savage marauder. Even in his generally satisfactory treatment of the waterways the author falls into slips of carelessness, as on page 177 where he confuses the Harlem with the East River. In the period after the Revolution he leaves the topographic method and studies development principally by means of the civic factor. Settlement is best studied in topography, confusion is the inevitable result of essaying the comprehension of the village and the town with neglect of the geographical essentials of the region out of which they grow. Yet, despite the defect of method in this part of the work the author has succeeded remarkably well in exhibiting the borough, particularly the region nearest the Sound, as a frontier of discordant settlement. His narrative makes plain the irritation caused by the invasion of Yankees from New England and their success in obtaining a foothold in Westchester, a species of provincial jealousy familiar in the works of Irving and Cooper. The work is abundantly illustrated, intelligently indexed for reference, and will serve an excellent end as the compendium of all the information as to Bronx settlement than can be desired by students of history. WILLIAM CHURCHILL.

**The American Mediterranean.** By Stephen Bonsal. xiv and 488 pp. Maps, ills., index. Moffat, Yard & Co., New York, 1912. \$3. 8½ x 6.

This book is written almost wholly from the political and historical standpoint and it covers the important islands of the West Indies, the Spanish Main, Mexico and the Isthmus. The author hopes apparently to awaken a larger interest in these neighboring lands among the American people and he attempts to point out the potential advantages of many of the islands which will follow the opening of the canal. -With an awakened interest must come at the same time a larger amount of concern because of the strange practices and incendiary motives which form the basis of the education of many of the dwellers of the islands. In the rough, the story of Alexis Nord, Castro and Diaz are known, but the author has written for us the background without which any judgment must be opinionated. Many Americans will read with surprise and likely with horror the accounts of voodooism as it is practiced at our gates. An important chapter of the book, "The Usufruct of the West Indies," estimates the commercial value of the sugar, bananas, cotton and cacao crops of the islands, and the author cites the German commercial growth among the West Indies as worthy of our study and rivalry. The value of the book for historical studies is increased by the inclusion of many state papers in the appendix. ROBERT M. BROWN.

#### SOUTH AMERICA

**Through South America.** By Harry Weston Van Dyke. With an introduction by John Barrett. xxiv and 446 pp. Map, ills., index. Thomas Y. Crowell Co., New York, 1912. \$2. 8½ x 6.

A long historical sketch—nearly one-fourth of the entire volume—shows the author's appreciation of the interest which (for the people of the United States, at least—and at last) all parts of South America unquestionably possess. The course of stirring events in South American history is traced from the age of discovery to the battle of Ayacucho and the close of the struggle for the liberation of Spanish continental dependencies in the New World. Then follow chapters describing Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia, Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, and the Guianas. These descriptive chapters deal with topics so numerous—products, climate, topography, manners, customs, etc.—that it would be unfair to expect uniform merit in all of the views advanced. The book is pleasantly written and attractively illustrated. That premised, it becomes easier for us to admit that we have read with surprise, what is said in regard to the "Chileno" on page 314, and with astonishment what is said on page 351, about the healthfulness of Cuzco.